



# NEWS RELEASE

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## **USDA RURAL DEVELOPMENT ANNOUNCES EXPANSION OF COVERAGE AREAS IN YORK AND CUMBERLAND COUNTIES**

### **Programs Aimed at Homeownership Now Available**

BANGOR, August 4, 2005 –USDA Rural Development State Director Michael W. Aube is pleased to announce the expansion of USDA Rural Development's coverage area. After a recent evaluation, additional areas of York and Cumberland Counties have been designated eligible lending areas, giving residents new opportunities for homeownership.

State Director Aube stated "The expansion of these essential housing programs provides residents with new opportunities for homeownership, which strengthens families and communities."

Now fully eligible under the expansion are Scarborough and Saco, as well as a substantial part of Biddeford and Westbrook. A map of eligible areas can be found on the Maine Rural Development website at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/me/>.

Housing Programs now available are Rural Development's Section 502 Guaranteed Single Family Housing Program, Section 502 Direct Single Family Housing Program, Section 515 Direct Rural Rental Housing Program, Section 538 Guaranteed Rural Rental Housing Program, and Section 504 Repair and Rehabilitation Loan and Grant Programs. These essential programs help sustain rural citizens who cannot afford decent housing. Programs are available to assist rural Maine citizens with obtaining affordable housing, as well as rental housing, and to provide assistance to elderly and very low income families in making home improvements.

Over 190,000 rural families have been assisted by USDA Rural Development's Single Family Housing Programs nationwide for a total investment of \$16.7 billion since the beginning of the Bush Administration in 2001. In Maine, the agency has assisted 826 Maine families obtain homeownership through its Single Family Housing Programs, for a total of over \$66 million invested in the homeownership in Fiscal Year 2004.

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For more information on Rural Development's housing programs, please contact Rural Development at (207) 883-0159 or visit the Maine Rural Development website at: [www.rurdev.usda.gov/me](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/me). Eligible Income limits are posted at: [www.rurdev.usda.gov/me/SFH/sfh.htm](http://www.rurdev.usda.gov/me/SFH/sfh.htm).

USDA Rural Development's mission is to deliver programs in a way that will support increasing economic opportunity and improve the quality of life of rural residents. As a venture capital entity, Rural Development has invested over \$50 billion since the beginning of the Bush Administration to provide equity and technical assistance to finance and foster growth in homeownership, business development, and critical community and technology infrastructure. As a result, over 800,000 jobs have been created or saved through these investments. Further information on rural programs is available at a local USDA Rural Development office or by visiting USDA's web site at <http://www.rurdev.usda.gov>.



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